



Maximum : 16°C SUNSET Today 06:34 PM Minimum : 7°C SUNRISE Tomorrow 06:43 AM Humidity : 50%

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LIFE & TIMES / 08 CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY KIT: SOCIAL DISTANCING TO FLATTEN THE CURVE Countries around the world are closing borders and putting citizens under lockdown in a bid to contain the new coronavirus outbreak, labelled a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO).....



05/NEWS... FOURTH CORONAVIRUS DEATH REPORTED IN INDIA, NUMBER OF CASES RISES TO 173 India reported the death of a COVID-19 patient from Punjab on Thursday taking the toll in the country to four, the Union health ministry said. According to the ministry, the number of novel coronavirus cases

11 / Sports..... GREECE HANDS OVER OLYMPIC FLAME TO TOKYO 2020 Athens - Greece on Thursday handed over the Olympic flame to Tokyo 2020 organisers at a ceremony held behind closed doors amid calls for the Olympics to be postponed over the coronavirus pandemic.....



News Digest

Mini-Bus Falls Into Gorge, 3 Dead

Jammu: Three people were killed and another critically injured when a private mini-bus skidded off the road and plunged into a 400-meter gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Thursday, police said. The accident occurred early morning near Kenta village when the driver of the vehicle lost control, the police official said. He said the vehicle was on its way to Basantgarh from Ramnagar. Rescuers swung into action after noticing the vehicle. Three people -- driver Bisher Singh (48), Ravinder Singh (35) and Sanjay Singh (32)-- died, while Rakesh Kumar (25) was rescued and was in a critical condition. He was shifted to a hospital, the official said. The Udhampur district administration had ordered the suspension of public transport. P10

Speedy Vehicle Mows Down Scooty Rider

Srinagar: An elderly man on Thursday died after his two-wheeler was hit by a speedy vehicle in Chanpora area of this capital city. 60-year-old Ali Mohammad Gusoo of Bemina was killed on the spot after a speedy vehicle hit his scooty near Chanpora Bypass this afternoon, news agency GNS reported. After the incident, police arrested the accused driver with the help of CCTV footage. "A case under relevant sections of law has been registered and further investigations taken up," a police officer said.

Man With Fake Currency Arrested

Srinagar: Police on Thursday said that a man was arrested after fake Indian currency was recovered from him in this capital city. Niaz Ahmed Rather of Padshahi bagh was arrested by police when he was trying to purchase some articles using counterfeit currency in Sonwar market, a police spokesperson said. Fake Indian currency notes of Rs. 500 and Rs 2000 denomination were recovered from his possession. "A case FIR No. 27/2020 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Ram Munshi Bagh and investigation into the matter has been initiated," the spokesperson added.

Youth Held During CASO In Pulwama

Srinagar: Government forces on Thursday arrested a youth during a cordon and search operation (CASO) in south Kashmir's Pulwama district. This morning, a joint team of state forces launched a search operation in Hakripora village of Pulwama after receiving specific inputs about the presence of militants in the area, news agency KNO reported. During the search operation, reports said an unidentified youth was arrested. A police official said the youth has been detained for questioning.

PM Modi Calls For Civil Curfew

NEW DELHI - Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday appealed to all citizens to stay indoors as much as possible to avoid getting infected by the novel coronavirus, saying the world has never seen a danger as grave as this. Modi also called for a 'Janta curfew' on March 22, from 7 am to 9 pm, and said no citizen, barring those in essential services, should get out of the house on that day. The prime minister's appeal came on a day when India P10

78 Quarantined After Arrival From Leh

Srinagar - Authorities in Kashmir on Thursday quarantined 78 people, who arrived here from Leh in Ladakh union territory, for suspected novel coronavirus infection, officials said. The two-week quarantine has been made mandatory for all persons coming to Kashmir from Ladakh. "Seventy-eight passengers arriving from Leh have been quarantined P10

Italian Couple, US Citizen Deported

Srinagar: An Italian couple and a United States national on Thursday were deported by the officials of the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory administration. Among the four tourists, three were sent back on Thursday while the fourth one is leaving Kashmir on Friday, a top official told news agency KNT. Among those who were deported today were an Italian couple and a US citizen. The official, according to the report admitted that there was laxity on part of the authorities who allowed entry of these tourists. Official added that these P10

Population 7 Million, Ventilators 97, Kashmir Braces For COVID-19

Auqib Javeed

SRINAGAR:- With a population of 68.88 lakh Kashmir Valley has only 97 ventilators to help critically-ill coronavirus patients who require invasive mechanical ventilation to survive. Sources at the Health Department told Kashmir Observer that there is a shortage of ventilators in the Kashmir valley and almost all the functional ventilators are occupied presently. Valleys premier health care institute, Sheri Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, (SKIMS) Soura has 40 ventilators while State Hospital (SMHS) has 18 ventilators. 16 Ventilators are at Chest Diseases Hospital, Drugjan, ten at GBP Hospital for Children, two at Lal Ded Memorial Maternity Hospital and two at Bone and Joints Hospital, Barzulla. South Kashmir's Government Medical College Hospital at Anantnag has two ventilators, while North Kashmir's GMC Hospital has three. There are four ventilators at District Hospital Handwara. Kupwara and Bandipora district hospitals have no ventilator facility at all. According to Medical Superintendent



SKIMS, Dr. Farooq Jan the institute has 40 ventilators right now but some of them are out of order and remaining remain occupied most of the time. "Generally most of them remain occupied but I don't know the current status," Dr. Jan admitted. When asked what if they face rush of patients due to coronavirus break out in Kashmir how will they manage? Dr Jan said, "We will manage at that time and we are in the process of purchasing 60 more ventilators." Doctors at Srinagar's another major territory hospital, SMHS told Kashmir Observer that all the ventilators in the hospital are occupied with patients and they don't have one dedicated for the COVID-19 patients. Doctors said they even don't have face masks available in sufficient numbers. "Forget ventilators, we don't have even face masks for doctors. I wore this mask at 8:00 AM

today and it's 4:PM I am still using it when medically you need to change the mask every 2 hours," a doctor said wising anonymity. For some critically-ill COVID-19 patients, mechanical ventilation can be the difference between recovery and death, doctors say. Ventilators assist or replace respiratory functions, pumping oxygen into the blood for vital organs. They are "the main supportive treatment" for patients P10

Indian Pilgrim Dies Of Coronavirus In Iran 'Death Is Staring At Us', Say Stranded Kashmiri Pilgrims

Izhar Nazir Ali

SRINAGAR: With one unidentified Indian pilgrim succumbing to dreaded coronavirus infection in Iran, hundreds of stranded Kashmiri pilgrims are fearing the worst, as their repeated requests for evacuation are met with silence. The government on Thursday said one Indian who tested positive for coronavirus has died in Iran while the other citizens infected



Iranian government. Noting that the virus tends to be more fatal for those whose immunity levels are low, a senior MEA official said the deceased, an elderly person, belonged to the vulnerable age group and had health-related complications. The death was not because of lack of medical attention or care, he said. "Death is staring at us. P10

'VIP Kids' Walk Out Of Srinagar Airport Without Covid-19 Screening

SRINAGAR: Two Kashmiri students returning from Bangladesh walked out of the Srinagar International Airport on Thursday morning without undergoing the mandatory screening for the Covid-19 infection, courtesy their 'influential parents'. According to reports, two female MBBS students enrolled at Dhaka Medical College arrived with 30 other students at the Srinagar International Airport in an early morning Indigo flight from Kolkata. All the students were kept at the arrival lounge with 250 other travellers who had flown in from different parts of the country. "While we were speculating administration's next move, an airport



Students had reached Kolkata two days ago and were screened properly at the airport there. In Delhi too, she said the airport officials screened the students before allowing them to board Srinagar bound flight. "But when we landed at the

Srinagar Airport, we were detained by officials and kept with other passengers who had arrived from different countries in other flights," she said. "We were kept like animals at the airport lounge. We could not even breathe properly since it was overcrowded," she added. According to Dr Adnan Firdous Raina, a Resident at SKIMS, Neurology Department, he was at the airport to receive his sister. "It was utter surprise for me to see two officials taking away their wards while other students, despite no symptoms, were quarantined". Dr Iqra, who had come to the airport to receive her sister was furious. She told P10

Govt Imposes Curbs To Battle Coronavirus

SRINAGAR: Kashmir was put under virtual lockdown on Thursday as authorities scrambled through the previous night to come up with a strategy to contain the spread of coronavirus in the valley, a day after a woman with travel history to Saudi Arabia tested positive for the disease. Public transport in Srinagar city, the summer capital of the Jammu and Kashmir Union territory, was ordered off the roads, while markets were shut on orders of the authorities. The steps were taken hours after a 67-year-old woman from Khanwar, who had returned on March 16 from Saudi Arabia after performing Umrah, tested positive for COVID-19, officials said here.

As the infected person was not placed under any quarantine or isolation upon her return, the authorities had to seal off the entire neighbourhood of Khanwar falling within 300 metres radius of the affected patient's residence, the officials said. Several relatives of the infected woman who had primary contact with her have been advised to undergo tests while others, who might have had secondary contact with the patient, have been asked to undergo self-isolation for two weeks. In an effort to contain spread of the infection in Srinagar district, the administration constituted and activated 21 medical teams for holding house-to-house inspections P10

NC, Congress Suspend Political Activities In Kashmir

SRINAGAR: National Conference and the Jammu and Kashmir unit of Congress party on Thursday announced suspension of political activities in Kashmir in the wake of novel coronavirus pandemic in the Valley. "In view of a positive COVID-19 case in Kashmir, all JKNC gatherings are hereby suspended," a party spokesperson said here. "Colleagues and workers are requested not to hold any outreach activity for the time being. Party's central office, Nawa-e-Subah, premises will be only open for urgent work." The spokesperson asked party leaders and activists to avoid visiting the residence of NC president Farooq Abdullah, who was released from an over seven-month detention last week. "We are overwhelmed with the large number of people visiting Dr Farooq P10

Chorus For High-Speed Internet Grows In Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The chorus for restoration of high-speed 4G internet services on mobile phones in Jammu and Kashmir has grown following the detection of the first case of coronavirus in the valley. Several people, including Srinagar Mayor Junaid Mattu and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iltija Mufti, have called for the restoration of the services to help raise awareness about the virus. "World's battling coronavirus but J&K admin still unrelenting & refuses to lift inhuman ban on 4G. In times of COVID pandemic, access to Internet & info is a necessity not a privilege. Are Kashmiri lives so cheap? (sic)," Iltija wrote on her mother's Twitter handle. She has been using the former chief minister's Twitter account



since Mehbooba was detained on August 4 last year. The government in a recent order said the low speed internet will continue in the union territory till 26 March "in the interest of sovereignty and integrity" of the country. Mattu on Wednesday said the Kashmir Valley recorded its first positive case for novel coronavirus in Srinagar. The Srinagar mayor has written a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah requesting that 4G Internet services be restored in J-K. Mattu said the move would help minimize the impact of the spread of the virus. People in the valley said the high-speed internet was not a

luxury anymore, but a necessity in view of the virus outbreak across the world and have demanded its immediate restoration. "The administration in J-K must realise how important high speed internet can be at this time. People need to know information in real-time so that they prepare and preempt their actions against the spread of this virus," Shuja-ul-Haq, president of Kashmir Press Club, said. The residents in the valley said the world was looking up, on internet, for information to curb the spread the virus, so it was high-time for the authorities to restore the high-speed data services on mobile phones. "With growing fear of coronavirus in Kashmir, the world advances towards the virtual world to curb misinformation and increase awareness among people. P10

'Work From Home Impossible With 2G Net'- Abdullah Writes To PM Modi

National Conference (NC) president and Member of Parliament from Srinagar Farooq Abdullah wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday seeking immediate restoration of high-speed 4G internet services in Jammu and Kashmir. "As you are aware, the first case of coronavirus was detected in Kashmir yesterday which has resulted in authorities locking down large parts of the valley," Abdullah, who was last week released from a seven-month-long detention, said in a letter to the prime minister. P10

Amnesty Asks India To Lift Internet Curbs In J&K

Amnesty International India (AI) on Thursday urged the Centre to immediately restore high-speed 4G internet services in Jammu and Kashmir to help people in preparing against the spread of coronavirus. All executive director Avinash Kumar, in a statement, said the COVID-19 situation is constantly evolving and to ensure its full communication to the people of J and K the Centre must urgently lift internet restrictions in the region and ensure real time preparedness of the people against the spread of the virus. P10